

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 4, 11, and 14 have been amended. Claim 3 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, and 4-16 are pending and under consideration.

Rejection of Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 16 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 7, 8, 11, 12 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,766,895 issued to Matsumura.

Applicants amend independent claim 1 to include the features of claim 3, and amend independent claim 11 to include some of the allowable features of claim 14.

Because item 6 of the Office Action notes that claim 3 contains allowable features, claim 1 includes the features of claim 3, and claims 7 and 8 depend from claim 1, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 7, and 8 is respectfully requested.

Because item 6 of the Office Action notes that claim 14 contains allowable features, claim 11 includes some of the allowable features of claim 14, and claims 12 and 16 depend from claim 11, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 11, 12, and 16 is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 5 and 6 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumura in view of U.S. Patent 4,319,864 issued to Kaufeldt. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Because item 6 of the Office Action notes that claim 3 contains allowable features, claim 1 includes the features of claim 3 and claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 6 is respectfully requested.

Objection to Claims 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 13, 14, and 15

Claim 3 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Because claim 1 includes the features of claim 3 and claims 2, 4, 9, and 10 depend from claim 1, withdrawal of the objection to claims 2, 4, 9, and 10 is respectfully requested.

Because claim 11 includes some of the allowable features of claim 14 and claims 13, 14, and 15 depend from claim 11, withdrawal of the objection to claims 13, 14, and 15 is respectfully requested.

Summary

Claims 1, 2, 4-16 are pending and under consideration. It is respectfully submitted that none of the references taken alone or in combination disclose the present claimed invention.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: June 14, 2005

By: 
Gene M. Garner, II
Registration No. 34,172

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501